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EDITORIAL

Shifting to a circular approach in publishing research data: new opportunities to develop and promote ideas and curricula in vascular biology

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The new journal *Vascular Biology* was established in January 2019 and currently 27 papers have already been published, are in press, submitted or in preparation. In addition, the Journal expanded its associate editorial team to cover Middle East countries, Asia, and South America. Most of the received articles were review articles. The next step in the Journal's agenda is offering new opportunities to the authors and readers, thereby keeping abreast of the latest developments in science reporting.

Looking at the web on new trends in research publications, I was fascinated by a post entitled “Emerging Trends in the Academic Publishing Lifecycle” written by Christine Tulley for Scholarly Kitchen, *What's Hot and Cooking In Scholarly Publishing* <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2019/03/27/guest-post-emerging-trends-in-the-academic-publishing-lifecycle/>.

Cristine is Professor of English and Director of the Masters in Rhetoric and Writing Program and Academic Development Coordinator at The University of Findlay, Ohio. Her post was based on a presentation at the 2019 Researcher to Reader Conference in London and her recently published review article (1); she posits that the academic publication lifecycle has undergone radical changes over the past several years, which may have a significant impact on how research findings will be written, published, promoted, and read in the future.

She mentions analogous conclusion being drawn by early career researchers (2) and an investigation conducted by Bec Evans and Chris Smith from Prolifko on the publishing habits of a cohort of about 600 academics

(<https://www.slideshare.net/swarmcomms/the-life-of-a-productive-academic-author>). The latter report highlights how publication goals and pressure change throughout an academic's career. Early release of accepted research is imperative for US-based faculty on a tenure track as well as EU fellows who must publish as much as possible within the first 5–7 years of hire. Established researchers may be under different pressure to accomplish research, administration and teaching goals. It is therefore important that publishers better intercept and give voice to these different needs.

Christine affirms that the change is not only generational, or career related, rather reflects a conceptual shift in reporting science and developing curricula. In her post, she first describes the traditional linear model, by which research moves from the idea to publish to the actual publication stage. A team of scientists/academics conducts a study or develops an idea, submits an article to a top tier or aspirational journal and, if rejected, incorporates review feedback and sends it to the next publishing outlet down or up on the list (depending on their self-esteem and confidence on the work quality) until someone says yes.

Christine next reports that, in recent years, there has been a progressive move from this linear process to a circular one, that involves researchers, publishers and librarians; the new approach may respond better to regulatory matters and personal needs such as open access, REF guidelines in the UK, and tenure and promotion processes. The rationale behind the shift is

a radical rethinking of science and the role of scientists within the communication loop. Christine identifies several fundamental aspects of the publishing change:

- (1) Academics are already readers of those journals where they intend to publish and they are interested in participating in the scientific conversation happening in that specific space, no matter whether their research is concluded or not; in fact, this trend is inspired by the intention to develop new ideas raised by their last publication rather than publishing it and immediately jumping onto a totally unrelated project.
- (2) Both early career and established researchers are more targeting newer journals, mid-tier journals, and open-access journals that more directly address their interests, offer the option of early release, and promote dissemination. This mixed publishing culture focuses on the top tier as well as platforms that better suit publishing needs. It also responds to the impact on publicly funded scientific research of Plan S, an initiative for Open Access publishing, which requires that, from 2021, scientific publications that result from research funded by public grants must be published in compliant open-access journals or platforms.
- (3) Researchers are interested not only to publish their work, but also to promote the impact of the publication. Probably this is the most revolutionary aspect of the circular approach. Promotion of findings could be paralleled by refinement and amelioration, immediately after publication and even at an earlier stage. For instance, an author might start promoting and sharing research data with the wider scientific audience as soon as the study findings are analysed or pick up this option during the revise-and-resubmit response from a scholarly journal. In this way, he/she might crowdsource findings to find a way to address reviewer feedback more effectively. Another recently available option is to submit an article draft for feedback to one of the preprint servers such as arXiv, ChemRxiv, and bioRxiv as a means of getting peer feedback prior to an official submission to a journal that permits preprint submission. These servers offer a free distribution service and an open archive for scholarly articles in different disciplines. Registered users can submit their reports that have to pass a

moderation process and assessment of plagiarism but are not peer reviewed. In addition, many universities are providing postgraduate students with training courses on developing media profiles as they plan to publish data or search for academic positions.

In consideration of what was previously mentioned, the Editorial Board of *Vascular Biology* wishes to invite submissions of the following types: Methodology articles and Graphical articles. These article types are to allow researchers to express aspects of their research without jeopardising the publication of results of a full research project at a later date. The goal is to offer these article types and to eventually expand the range of articles types offered to respond to the needs of the community interested in the journal.

1. Methodology articles: A step-by-step description of a new protocol or optimization of it. It may or may not contain data. Authors are often requested to exclude protocols from their research articles due to space restrictions imposed by journals; however, this is important information that needs to be made available to other researchers so that studies can be replicated.
2. Graphical articles: A short text describing a vascular image or a novel mechanism. These may be illustrations, schematic images or photographs. They may represent a new mechanistic understanding or they may represent something that is well-known but, in a way, which is particularly visually striking.

The Journal is offering these new opportunities from 1 July 2020. All the articles will be revised as usual by external referees and Editors and assessed for scientific and ethical rigor. Authors can consult the Editor prior to submission in case they are not sure whether their submission is fit to the mentioned purposes.

Declaration of interest

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